



The South India CHURCHMAN

The Magazine of the Church of South India

● AUGUST 1979

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Rates of subscription per annum : In India Rs. 6.00. In England £1. In U.S.A. \$2.50. Foreign subscription paid in India Rs. 9. Single copy 65 P. (Bank Commission of Re. 1 to be added on all mofussil cheques.)

Honorary (and ex-officio) Business Manager : Mrs. D. L. Gopal Ratnam, M.A. All remittances and communications about new subscriptions, discontinuance of subscriptions, advertisements and changes of address should be sent to the Business Manager, South India Churchman, Synod Office, P.O. 4906, Cathedral, Madras-600 086. Telephone : 811266.

Honorary Agent in the United Kingdom : Mrs. Elton, The Rectory, Itteringham, Norfolk, Nor. 17y.

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Independence Day 1979

Since we believe that God acts in history it is fitting that we should try to understand his purposes for the land of our birth using Independence Day not only as an occasion for celebration but also as an opportunity for thought and reflection, prayer and meditation. It is well to recall the brave words that were spoken by Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru when freedom came to us at midnight on August 15, 1947. 'The achievement we celebrate today', he said, 'is but a step, an opening of opportunity, to the greater triumphs and achievements that await us. Are we brave enough and wise enough to grasp this opportunity and accept the challenge of the future?' How have we responded to the challenges of the past three decades? Nehru also said, 'It is a fateful moment for us in India, for all Asia and the world'. What has our freedom meant for the peoples of Asia and the world?

The series of political crises and the evident lack of leadership that have shaken us recently should not result in a mood of negative pessimism. There are peaks of laudable achievement still visible above the threatening storm clouds and the black pall of corruption, unimaginable intrigue, uncontrolled passions, selfish ambitions and ugly violence that have marred our national life. But can any man or woman who was old enough to know what India was like before the dawn of Independence doubt that, despite our failures, this is today a better land to live in? The sluggishness of the past has given place to a country that is throbbing with new life and vibrant with hope for the future. The main point to remember and rejoice in is that our turbulence is due to the problems of freedom and not to the random disturbances of an enslaved country. We have earned the right to make our own mistakes and to understand the error of our ways so that we are becoming more aware of the lessons of history. We are learning painfully that there can be no true freedom without responsibility as we prepare to face a period of political instability.

In our dealings with the world we can discern a welcome change from ideologically-slanted verbal aggression and Third World political rhetoric to a more realistic concern with the economic bases of sound international relations. India has a vested interest both in pushing her own claims abroad as a competitor with a growing industrial thrust, technical know-how and managerial skills and as a nation committed to the establishment of a new international economic order based on genuine inter-dependence instead of the dangerous imbalance in the inter-relatedness of rich and poor countries (DCs and LDCs when reduced to inhuman equations!). Deep study of and involvement in the economic realities of the world situation will do us more good in the long-run than political mavericking in international forums because of our command of the English language!

The growing disillusionment with the claim that authoritarianism has been replaced by democratic freedom was very much under the surface till recently. But now certain critical events make a deeper analysis of the current trends imperative. It is one thing to overthrow the wrong dynastic aspirations of the Nehru



family and another to reject the liberal, humanistic and secular values of Jawaharlal Nehru. It is time our intellectuals broke their silence about the disastrous tendencies inherent in the conservative backlash which is part of the present unhappy situation. The erstwhile champions of anti-authoritarianism are apparently not equally concerned to fight against archaism, obscurantism, irrationalism and unscientific theories or to deplore the steady erosion of the secular values and ideals of our Constitution. But if intellectuals are not always capable of dealing with inner crises (as Ortega-y-gasset, the Iberian philosopher, noted during the Spanish Civil War) it is heartening that there has been an upsurge (even if politically motivated) in favour of secularism and the democratic rights of underprivileged classes and the minorities. It is tragic that the country had to shudder through unbelievable communal violence and bloodshed to begin a return to sanity. Let us hope and pray that this sensible and healthy trend back to the secular bases of our national life will continue to grow and strengthen.

The acid test of whether there is a sincere return to secular ideals will be the fate of the controversial Freedom of Religion Bill. It will be a species of cruelty if the politicians who have now had the courage to speak out against it were only using it as one more weapon in their armoury of anti-government missiles. The minorities can only hope there is no unleavened bread of hypocrisy in the secular stance taken by the majority of the political parties. What a betrayal that will be of champions of secularism like Prof. Zaki Anwar of Jamshepur who lived in a non-Muslim locality in order to carry on a crusade for communal harmony. On the night of 10th April '79 he wrote a short story which began as follows:

Christ has been hoisted on the Cross.
Nails are being driven :
Khhatt . . . khhatt . . . khhatt . . .
The sound continually strikes my ears.
And I have to write a radio talk ;
the
subject is National Integration.
On my writing pad I have been
able to inscribe only ' National
Integration ' .
Another nail is being driven.
The same sound again.

On the morning of the 11th April he read the story to his friends. That same night Zaki Anwar was killed by a mob in the sad frenzy that can divide once friendly neighbours. Must we not acknowledge that Zaki Anwar's death is part of the pain in the heart of God who suffered for all men on the Cross that they may be reconciled to one another as brothers?

The crisis of power and politics at the Centre raises some vital issues regarding the political future of Christians and other minorities. As far as Christians are concerned, it is both humiliating and humbling to realize how little influence for good we are able to exert when there is a break-down in the political system. We seem to wait in the ante-chambers of power, hate in hand, hoping some crumbs of mercy will fall in our direction! Instead of the present ecclesiastical politics of survival, the Church should initiate a vigorous discussion as to the nature of its relations with the State in a pluralistic society like ours and help Christians to understand the Biblical teaching about politics and the role they can play in it. What is the style of Christians who have (and all credit to them!) gone into politics? How have Christian cabinet ministers and Christian cabinets (such as those in the North-East) been functioning? Is there a Christian contribution in the present crisis of politics and leadership in the States and at the Centre? Can Christians undertake the formation of a secular, democratic, radical political party which is not communal but open to all?

It is important to raise these questions when it is fashionable in Christian circles to talk in terms of socio-economic change and liberation without a matching political consciousness. While the few near-Marxist radical Christian groups (largely influenced by revolutionary Latin American theology) are a significant development, will it be unfair to say that the vast majority of Christians seem to be still at the old stage of apathy and inertia despite the stir over concessions for SC and ST Christians and the Freedom of Religion Bill? It is good that we have taken to going in processions if only to prove that the Church in

India is not sedentary but pedestrian! However, do we know where we are really headed for? Are these actions the result of clear political thinking (reflection-action!) or only an instinctive response to a feeling of being threatened or an opportunistic gesture by some leaders? If was John Webster Grant who pointed out the danger of Christians in India, frustrated by having no role to play in national politics, turning the Church into an arena charged with conflicts, demonstrations and confrontations as an outlet for their thwarted political desires and ambitions! It again underlines the need for the proper political education of the community.

Pandit Nehru gave the nation the following objectives:

'To bring freedom and opportunity to the common man, to the peasants and workers of India; to fight and end poverty and ignorance and disease; to build up a prosperous, democratic and progressive nation, and to create social, economic and political institutions which will ensure justice and fullness to every man and woman'.

These are memorable words that continue to strike a responsive chord in every Christian mind and heart seeking first the Kingdom of Heaven, not as a pious hope, but as a historic mission to take up our cross and follow Christ through the crowded streets of our hunger and poverty and the *via dolorosa's* of our national history. And yet we have done so little despite our commitment to nation building when we think of all that still needs to be done. Let us pray that the Holy Spirit of Love and Reconciliation may work in us and commend itself to our fellowmen and women of our great Motherland as we kneel in penitence before the Cross on Independence Day asking for forgiveness and a renewed dedication to the service of all our people.

Guest Editorial by
CHANDRAN DEVANESEN.

Unity in Faith

(A Brief report on the work of the C.S.I. Synod Theological Commission during the first three decades by Dr. J. R. Chandran)

From the beginning, the Church of South India paid serious attention to theological questions relating to its ecclesiology, faith ministry. At the very first meeting of the Synod of the Church of South India a Faith and Order Committee was appointed consisting of all the Bishops and seven others to be appointed by the Bishops. At the following meeting of the Synod in 1950 in addition to the Faith and Order Committee a Theological Committee also was appointed which later came to be called the Synod Theological Commission. From 1958 onwards the Synod did not appoint a separate Faith and Order Committee. Bishop Lesslie Newbigin was the convener of the Faith and Order Committee and the Theological Commission till 1958, when Bishop A. H. Legg was

appointed Convener of the Theological Commission. From 1960 to 1978 with short breaks during 1964-65 and 1972, Dr. J. R. Chandran served as Convener.

The work of the Theological Commission during the last 30 years and the seriousness with which the Synod has dealt with the recommendations of the Theological Commission are evidence of the importance given by the C.S.I. to issues of faith and doctrine.

It may be pointed out that the questions raised from outside about the C.S.I. approach to Church Union challenged the Church to address itself to theological questions from the beginning. *Firstly*, the Lambeth

Conference and the Joint Committee of the Convocations of Canterbury and York raised some questions which were referred to the Faith and Order Committee. These related to the Faith of the Church, Sacraments, Episcopal confirmation, Responsibility of bishops in safeguarding doctrine, relations with non-episcopal churches and Episcopal ordination. *Secondly*, with the opening of conversations with the Lutheran churches there began a process of theological exploration into the nature of the church's oneness in faith and doctrine. *Thirdly*, the proposals for the unification of the ministry in the Union schemes in Sri Lanka and North India called for theological reflection and comment on these proposals.

One of the statements produced in answer to the questions raised by the Joint Committee of the Convocations of Canterbury and York, namely that on the Relation of Doctrinal Credal and Confessional Statements to the Being of the Church has wide ecumenical significance, even today. It said:

'All creeds and confessions are subordinate standards subject to the Authority of the Word of God. The Word of God is primarily and essentially the Incarnate Word, Jesus Christ. It is in the Holy Scriptures that God speaks this Word to us because they are the inspired record and testimony to this revelation. They are therefore the supreme and decisive standard of faith. But in seeking to understand them we must remember that Christ the Central Subject and at the same time Lord and Master of the Holy Scriptures is the ultimate touchstone of every Biblical book and Word.'

For several years during the yearly period the Theological Commission had to be occupied with the issues raised in the Conversations with the Lutherans and the Commission actively participated in the process which led to the adoption of the Agreed Statements on *The Relation of Doctrinal and Confessional Statements to the Being of the Church, Law and the Gospel, The Doctrine of election, The Lord's Supper and The Church and the Ministry*.

The Anglicans raised some questions on the Statement on the *Church and the Ministry* as it appeared to them as advocating one interpretation of episcopacy to the exclusion of others. Some Lutherans also expressed dissatisfaction that it did not give any positive exposition of the meaning of historic episcopate. In response to these questions the theological Commission issued a new statement on The Episcopate in a Future United Church—This statement dealt with the nature of episcopal authority, functions of a bishop in the Church, the value of continuity of the ministry represented by the historic-episcopate, the wider recognition and acceptance of Bishops in contrast to Moderators or Superintendents of non-episcopal traditions, the combination of personal and corporate oversight of congregations and the unsolved problem of the union of the pastoral and administrative functions of the bishop. The statement also raised the question of transfer of bishops and said that while frequent transfers would be undesirable the Church should be open to the possibility of transfers. This statement was adopted by the Synod at the 1964 session.

Almost simultaneous with the discussion of the unsatisfactory nature of the Diaconate within the three-fold ministry in many Churches, Catholic as well

as Protestant, the C.S.I. also raised the question and the Theological Commission undertook a study of the nature and function of the *Diaconate*. In doing so the Commission was in touch with the developments in other churches and particularly the discussions on the diaconate in the Faith and Order Commission of the World Council of Churches. A paper on the subject by Dr. Lukas Vischer, of the W.C.C. was considered specially helpful. The Synod Theological Commission recommended that the C.S.I. should make the diaconate a distinctive ministry to which some may have a life-time calling instead of keeping it as an inferior order which is a stepping stone for the presbyterate. The statement said:

'Within the three-fold ministry some who have a calling for compassionate service are to be set aside by deacons' ordination to be the representative organ of the Church's *diaconia* in the name of Christ. We believe this to be a life-time calling to serve and that only when the diaconate is so conceived will it be a worthy instrument of Christ's *diaconia* and a part of His total ministry. The deacon's particular responsibility in worship would be for the offerings of the people and the intercession for the world. His responsibility in the world would be the organisation, co-ordination and promotion of Christian service and social action, a ministry which expresses Christ's compassion for His people'.

The Synod of 1964 received the recommendation and asked the diocese to make further study of the ways in which the diaconate can be made a more meaningful ministry along the lines suggested by the theological Commission. The Synod also authorised the Dioceses willing to do so to develop a pattern of diaconate which might encourage those called to it to accept it as a satisfying life-time ministry. Some dioceses have made some experiments in the direction of a permanent diaconate, but nothing very significant has emerged so far. However, the subject was pursued further in a consultation held at the request of the theological Commission and the Synod Ministerial Committee under the joint sponsorship of the C.I.S.R.S. and the Community Service Centre, Madras, on the theme *Love and Justice in the World of Tomorrow*. On the basis of the report of this consultation, the Theological Commission at its meeting in December, 1970, reaffirmed that

'the present pattern of the organised ministry in which the diaconate is held as a stepping stone to the presbyterate is unsatisfactory and inadequate to express the fullness of the ministry of Christ. Jesus' ministry had two main dimensions, the proclamation of the Gospel and the deeds of love meeting the needs of people. The two are distinct aspects of His Ministry, thought they cannot be separated from each other. In the Church's ministry, they are held together by bringing them together in the liturgical celebration of Jesus Christ in which the presbyter and deacon will have their distinctive parts.'

One of the consequences of the study of Diaconate was a renewed recognition of the need to keep in close touch with the thinking of the Church at the grass-root level. Already the dioceses were consulted before the Theological Commission made its recommendations to the Synod. But in order to have more

(Continued on page 8)

Divine Electing Grace

The Old Testament is emphatic in saying that the nation of Israel (Jews) is the Divine Elect. God called Abraham and promised him a land as well as a nation to be made out of him. The Jews believe that they are the chosen race of God. However, this is not an election in the democratic sense, but a selection of God through His Grace. In other words—it is 'Divine Choice' or 'Divine Will'.

In our daily life, many occurrences are attributed to God's Will by some of us, to accidents and fate by some people and to our own individual choice by others. When we examine these experiences, we find that in some cases we can exercise full freedom of our choice, in some other cases, our choice is limited, while in others we have no choice at all. In simple cases such as choosing a pen among a variety of pens or a saree from a large variety of sarees, we feel that we can exercise our full freedom of a choice. But our freedom of choice is limited in some other cases. For instance, when one sends one's application seeking admission into a liberal arts college where there are 1st, 2nd and 3rd preferences for certain courses, one may be offered a place in one of the courses. Sometimes one may not be chosen for any. In 1904, the late Dr. S. Radhakrishnan wanted to join the Madras Christian College to do his B.A. (Hons.). At that time there were only three arts subjects offered by the college—English, Philosophy and History, out of which, he could choose one. One of his relatives who passed his B.A. (Hons.) with Philosophy as his main subject, the previous year, offered him his books free of cost. That settled Dr. Radhakrishnan's problem of choice and he chose Philosophy. In the choice of a life partner also, somehow, one is not always sure of meeting with success. That is why, it is said that marriages are made in Heaven.

Different from all these, there are certain cases, where we do not have a choice at all. In our birth either as a male or a female or eunuch, we do not have a choice. Gynaecologists say that this is due to a chance factor. Again, our birth into a rich, noble, poor or beggarly families or in a particular country or caste, is not the result of our own choice. Some people are even born blind or with deformities, which are not of their choice.

We also come across certain extra-ordinary cases in our lives, where men are affected by favourable or unfavourable circumstances. When met by favourable circumstances with good chances to our advantage, we say we are very lucky. When affected by unfavourable circumstances with crises and catastrophies, we attribute them to fate or ill-luck. Once a Crossword Puzzle carried 2½ lakhs of rupees worth of prizes with one lakh as the first prize. Only one young Muslim got the first prize of one lakh and his picture appeared in the newspapers. In Bombay, there was a rich Muslim

widower, who had an only daughter. Having seen the photograph of the young Muslim, this rich man from Bombay rushed to him and gave him his only daughter to be his wife as well as his entire property and left for Mecca. Many of us call this as *Adrishta*. There was a rich American business man, a billionaire, who owned a number of steam ships. One day, he received a cable saying that four of his mercantile ships carrying cargo, sank into the sea, owing to a storm. Unable to bear the shock, the businessman took poison and died. We generally attribute such a tragedy to fate. Many times, we realise that both these extreme cases of favourable and unfavourable circumstances are due to certain factors which go beyond our comprehension and control and we attribute these to Divine Will. When our choices do not meet with success, some of us think that God is testing us or God is unjust or partial. How far are we justified in our line of thinking?

II

In the Old Testament, we come across a number of references to Divine Will or Choice. We shall begin with Cain and Abel, who were the children of the first couple, Adam and Eve. Cain was a tiller of the ground and Abel a shepherd. Both of them brought their offerings to God. Cain offered the fruit of the ground, which he tilled and Abel a sheep from the flock which he tended. But God accepted the offering of Abel and rejected that of Cain. Why did God reject Cain's offering? Likewise, Isaac's wife, Rebecca, gave birth to twins—Esau and Jacob. God chose Jacob and hated Esau (Malachi : 1 : 2). Why did God choose Jacob? Divine choice appears very strange to human understanding and Judgment. We have a number of examples in the Old Testament where God chose His prophets from among the common and simple folk.

Let us consider our Lord's parable of the householder and the labourers, from the Gospel of St. Matthew (Ch. 20). A householder hired the labourers to work in his vineyard. After agreeing upon the wage of a denarius a day, he sent them into the vineyard in the morning. At about the 3rd hour of the day, he found some more labourers and asked them to work in his vineyard. Likewise, he did at the 6th, 9th and 11th hours of the day. In the evening he ordered his steward to pay each one of them a denarius. When the steward paid them all, some of them began to grumble at the householder. Perhaps they felt that a few hours of their seniority over the others was overlooked. The householder, then told them: 'Friends, take what belongs to you. I choose to give the same to this last group of labourers, as I give to you. Am I not allowed to do what I choose with what belongs to me? Do you begrudge my generosity?'

Let us turn to St. Paul, who justifies the free electing grace of God in the 9th chapter of his epistle to the Romans. Paul tells us that God cannot be unjust or partial. He justifies the unquestionable right of God to do with His creatures, whatever seems best to Him. Paul quotes a passage from the scripture in support of his contention. The Lord said to Moses: 'I will have mercy upon whom I will have mercy and I will have compassion upon whom I will have compassion'. This means that God will show mercy on those whom He likes and will harden the hearts of those whom He wills.

This view raises the question whether we should find fault with God because His choice and mercy do not have any basis—such as man's moral character, sincere will or merit. Does this mean God's choice is arbitrary? Paul sternly rebukes such questioners saying 'Oh! man! who are you to find fault with God? Can the created thing question its creator? Can the pot question the potter? Has not the potter the full freedom to make a vessel of honour and another of dishonour?' (Rom. 9: 20, 21). According to Paul, God the creator has the perfect right to have His own will and choice exercised on the life of man, His creature.

The Jewish conscience developed through the centuries under the law, was accustomed to consider God's attitude to man, as depending entirely on merit and demerit of man's works. But Paul does not agree with this view. He condemns this righteousness of law and works. He defends the righteousness of faith, otherwise called his doctrine of justification by faith. Paul is writing this letter to the Jews and gentile Christians in Rome. He asserts that God has the absolute freedom to make Israel a vessel of honour or dishonour or make the gentiles as a vessel of honour or dishonour. The Gentiles, according to him, have attained to righteousness through faith, but the Jews still cling to their righteousness of law and works, which in his view, does not carry righteousness at all. Further he says that God may choose the believing gentiles and reject the unbelieving Jews. He quotes a passage from the scripture, where God said: 'I will call them my people which are not my people; I will call her my beloved which was not my beloved' (Hosea 2: 23).

III

Paul emphasises the absolute freedom of God to shape the destinies of individuals, in whatever way He likes, just as the potter chooses to shape his pots and jars according to his will. This view raises the question whether Paul ever considered man only as a pre-determined individual without any choice or freedom of his own—only as an object like pot. Are we to be considered no more than lifeless objects like pots? Are our lives pre-determined by God? If so, are we dependent entirely on fate? These questions are answered in two ways. Some people maintain that human individuals have full freedom of choice and hence they can shape their lives in accordance with their inherent individual abilities and talents. To them, man is the measure of all things. There are others who consider that there is no freedom of choice at all for man and that every event which occurs in man's life is already Pre-determined by God. Mahatma Gandhi thinks that there is very little or no freedom for

man. The little freedom man has, he says, can be compared to the freedom that can be exercised by the railway passengers in an overcrowded third class compartment. (now second class, with better amenities than at his time.)

Paul knew very well that such a view of determinism will lead the Jew to fatalism and indifference to life. To avoid this drift into determinism and fatalism, Paul turns to examine human responsibility. He reviews the question of the Jews from the human standpoint and finds that it is the Jews that are to be blamed for following the righteousness of law and works and for rejecting the righteousness of faith. He points out that the Divine Electing Grace calls for man's will for a personal faith in our Saviour. In the 10th Chapter of Romans, he explains the divine method as the easy way to salvation. Every one who calls upon the name of the Lord will be saved. Salvation is a matter of personal trust of faith in our living Lord Jesus Christ.

IV

Life is a process, needing constant adjustments. It is a continuous struggle in a world where there are contradictions, inconsistencies, good and evil, love and hatred, justice and injustice. The problems of human life and existence cannot be solved by arguments and interpretations of men who put their trust in the human intellect alone. After all, these arguments can enable us only to analyse and see the nature of the problems, but cannot offer solutions. For solutions, we shall have to fall upon the scriptures alone and follow them, just as the saints and sages of the past did.

All our solutions to the problems of life, as Paul has pointed out earlier, rest on our salvation, which could be obtained through our personal trust and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ. Such a trust and faith alone can enable us to look at good and evil, justice and injustice, contradictions and strifes, with an equal eye and with a mind that is unperturbed and equipoised. But such a faith also comes to us only from God through our self-surrender and meek submission to Him.

Let us refer to a verse from Paul's epistle to the Philippians for our final conclusion:

'Therefore my beloved... work out your own salvation, with fear and trembling, for God is at work in you, both to will and work for His good pleasure'.
Amen.

[Sermon preached in the Anderson Hall, Madras Christian College, Tambaram].

DR. CH. G. S. SREENIVASA RAO.

The Transfiguration of Jesus Christ—A study in Psychic Experience

by

DR. SUNDARARAJ MANICKAM

The incident of Christ's Transfiguration on the mountain top as recorded in the 17th and 9th chapters of St. Matthew's and St. Mark's Gospels respectively is an event of great spiritual significance. According to these accounts Jesus and three of His disciples (Peter, James and John) *went apart* or withdrew themselves from the crowd, from the hustle and bustle of life, from the stereotyped and mechanical routine of things into a high mountain—a place of tranquillity and serene atmosphere conducive to contemplation. There on the mountain top they were all in a state of intense prayer, waiting upon God. They were *alone with God*. It was a sort of spiritual picnic or a retreat for them and in that retreat they meant business with God.

While they were in an attitude of prayer, wrapped up in a celestial atmosphere, the disciples saw Jesus transfigured. They saw His face shining as the sun, and His clothes becoming exceedingly white as snow. Jesus was found in the company of great saints—Moses and Elijah, seriously conversing with them perhaps about His death on the Cross. Thus it was a kind of Summit Conference attended by Moses, representing the Law, Elijah, representing the Prophets and Jesus, representing the immeasurable grace of God. What is the significance of all this to the disciples who were the silent witnesses? To them it should have been a preview of heaven and to us it is a reminder that we are no longer under Law but under the grace of God. We are no longer under curse and condemnation but under blessing and forgiveness. What a consolation!

It is good to be in a celestial and serene atmosphere, filled with the presence of God and to be charged by His power. It is indeed an exhilarating and enthralling experience to be in the presence of God and to be in the company of His saints. There at the mountain top the disciples had a glimpse into the heavenly mysteries. In other words it was a kind of psychic experience which should be shared with others. But to have such an experience, we should not be sitting all the time in the plains and the valley. We should become an *anchorite* (one who *goes apart*) first and then get away for sometime from the place of busy life of a mechanical nature and climb up to the Hills from where comes our help. We should launch out into the deep and scale great heights. Mountain climbing is no joke. It involves risk and great hardships. And yet it is worth trying. While climbing on hills you would inhale refreshing air. Your muscles and nerves get strengthened you develop a greater stamina. From the moun-

tains one can have an over-all and a panoramic view of the things down below. On a new and higher spiritual plane we would make new discoveries about God and about our own selves. The disciples discovered new and more valuable truths about Jesus Christ. They heard the voice of God the Father testifying: 'This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him'. To know this truth Jesus had to take them to greater heights, from the valley to the pinnacle, from a lower level of ordinary and unthrilling experience to a higher level of spiritual enhancement. That is the reason why Peter said to Jesus: 'Lord, it is good for us to be here'. But Jesus did not pay heed to their request. He collected them and came down to the plains. He withdrew and went apart but he never failed to return to the place of His work, the field of his operation. Thus the story of Transfiguration takes us to taste the other aspect of this psychic experience. Coming down the hills or return is as important as withdrawal or going apart. Withdrawal and return are like the two sides of a coin. It is good to be with God and God's children always. It is a matter of great joy to be in the presence of God. But that is not the purpose of our retreat or withdrawal. It is not God's plan that we always remain on the mountain top for our own enlightenment and our own spiritual enrichment. God expects that we should, after having gained this new experience, go back to the place of our activities, to the maddening crowd, to the toiling millions and to the suffering lot and then share with them the vision that we got on the mountain top. He expects that we should also lead them into this new experience. While on earth, Jesus was always a man for others, and we are also expected to emulate Him in this respect. Therefore, return is as important as withdrawal and we should not forget that. After withdrawal, after a period of spiritual recuperation, we ought to return to the same society from which we came, of course with a renewal of mind and body to be more effective instruments of God—to be more actively involved in the affairs of mankind in general and in the life of the Church Universal in particular. Some people withdraw and never return. They are terribly satisfied if they settle down in a place of green pasture and still waters. It is not a correct spiritual experience. You are alone with God in order to be re-charged with His power, to be recreated after His image, to get a glimpse of the Lamb of God. There you discover the spirings of a fuller life and the latent talents hidden in you. But one should not stop with it. He is expected to get back to serve, to be involved and to participate.

You withdraw not to live for yourself in a sphere of splendid isolation and in an ideally situated ivory tower. Your new spiritual experience and discoveries will have value only when you share it with others and not otherwise. A transfiguration in the solitude can have no purpose, and perhaps even no meaning, unless the personality involved returns into the community out of which he has originally come. The return is the essence of the whole movement viz. the movement of withdrawal and return. This is apparent in Moses' solitary ascent into Mount Sinai. Moses ascended the mountain in order to commune with Yahweh at Yahweh's call. Yet Yahweh's whole purpose in calling Moses up is to send him down again as the bearer of a new law which Moses is to communicate to the rest of the people.

Withdrawal and transfiguration leading up to a return in glory and power can be discerned in the experience of mysticism and in the physical life of the vegetable world. During autumn the plants withdraw themselves from sight. It looks as if the whole vegetation is gone out of existence. You feel that the beauty is gone and something very important is missing. But what happens in Spring? Everything returns and re-emerges with freshness of life and beauty. This alternation could be seen in the lives of almost all the great mystics and spiritual leaders and founders of World Religions and Movements. Paul of Tarsus, St. Benedict, St.

Gregory the Great, the Buddha, Muhammed and Dante were some of the outstanding examples, of course besides Jesus and Moses, for this duality of movement of Withdrawal and Return. To become creative, to be man of vision and mission, it is imperative that we pass first out of action into ecstasy and out of ecstasy into action on a new and higher plane, for the withdrawal makes it possible for the individual to realize powers within himself which might have remained dormant. Such withdrawals may be voluntary as in the case of Jesus and his disciples or forced upon by circumstances beyond control. In either case the withdrawal is an opportunity, and perhaps a necessary condition, for the anchorite's transfiguration and then his return.

Let us also long for such an experience in the Lord. Let us set apart sometime to be alone so that we may be in communion with the Lord and let us behold the beauty of the Lord in all His glory and majesty. By spending time in His presence, let us discover a new meaning for our lives and get a better vision of an order of things—a new heaven and a new earth—a transformed society with transformed lives. Thus the Transfiguration of Christ stands for a Duality of Movement—Withdrawal and Return and a new psychic experience of passing out of action into ecstasy and then out of ecstasy into action.

Christian Medical Care

Medical Missions all over the world were started by committed Christians, for the alleviation of suffering and healing of disease, in areas where medical relief was unheard of. The early missionaries suffered much privation, worked under adverse conditions and many succumbed to illness. The usually reached pockets of poverty, where people could not afford Medical care of where none was available. But nowhere in the history of Medical Missions, was treatment restricted to Christian patients alone. Contact with non-Christians brought a new surge of life in to these Missions, that were also committed to the propagation of Christianity. Treatment was usually free, as an added bait. Proselytizing became easier when free medicines and food supplements were offered. This state of affairs has continued down the years.

Today however only a minor percentage of Christians are really indigent. Even so, the prevalent feeling is that free treatment in Mission hospitals is their birth-right. The General consensus of opinion is that Foreign funds pouring into the Mission Hospitals are limitless, and that these funds must be used for free treatment of Christians, whatever their financial status.

The Missionaries have long since departed, and the funds that are available to Mission hospitals are dwindling, and rightly so. As self-respecting individuals it is our duty to support and encourage the useful work that Mission Hospitals in India have been doing, over the years. Free treatment to the indigent must

continue, irrespective of caste or creed. The only criterion should be poverty, and not a nominal affiliation to any Church. If a hospital is to become self-supporting, then the charging of patients is inevitable, and unless the rich pay for their treatment, it would be impossible to subsidize treatment to the poor. It has often been observed that those who crib most regarding payment of bills, are the Christians.

Criticism with intent to cause mischief, anonymous letters that are merely of nuisance value, interference in the internal administration of the Mission hospitals, can only hinder the work of healing, and interfere in the Christian witness of Mission hospitals.

Mission hospitals today can still be proud of the fact that their nursing care of patients is of an exceptionally high standard in comparison with that of Government or for that matter, private clinics. The charges are still within the means of the average individual, and there is no discrimination regarding the medical care of a patient, rich or poor. A Christian physician not only administers physical relief but also seeks to counsel and guide, in matters of the spirit. He is an instrument of the great Healer of body and soul. Staff in Mission hospitals are usually overworked and underpaid, yet deep conviction and commitment to the work of Healing, keeps them going. They are often weighed down by fatigue and monotony.

The Church and the laity must therefore encourage and support, not hinder the ministry of healing. All

good things need not be confined within the walls of the Mission compound. Selfishness and service can never go hand in hand. The barriers that limit us must be pulled down and our services be made available to every deserving person, Hindu, Muslim or Christian.

Christians can help in three simple ways :

— By holding united prayers for doctors and nurses. The prayer of a group is mighty in releasing spiritual power.

— By refraining from meddlesome interference in medical matters which they scarcely know about.

— And by supporting morally and financially the good work that is being carried out by mission hospitals.

— Only then can the effects of Christian Medical Care have a lasting impact on the nation.

DR. EVA BELL,
(C.S.I. Hospital, Udipi).

Unity in Faith—(Continued from page 3)

satisfactory exchange of views among the dioceses and to provide for a wider participation of clerical and members in the discussion of theological issues it was decided to have *Regional Theological Consultations*. These started functioning from 1966. From 1970 onwards, they have been constituted into Regional Theological Commissions.

Some of the important subjects taken up for study by the Theological Commission and on which statements were presented to the Synod were '*Baptism and Confirmation, the Eucharist, The Function and Theological Significance of Cathedrals in the CSI, The meaning of the Local Congregation and the place of Multi-Lingual Congregations, Meaning and practice of democracy in the life of the Church, the role of Women in the Church's Ministry, the Preparation of Congregations for Dialogue with people of other faiths and the Meaning of Conciliar Fellowship*.'

The discussion on the role of Women in the life and ministry of the Church led to the decision at the 1970 session of the Synod that women may be ordained as deacons subject to the same conditions as men. But it has taken several years to implement this decision. In 1976 three dioceses, Madras, Karnataka Central and Dornakal decided to ordain women to be deacons. At present there are four women deacons in the C. S. I.

The Theological Commission also continued the discussion on the ordination of women and the participation of women in the total life of the Church. As a result the 1976 Synod took an important unani-

mous decision to amend the constitution so that men and women may be equally eligible for ordination to the Presbyterate. But this amendment can come into force only if two-thirds of the dioceses in their diocesan Councils vote in favour of the amendment. Unfortunately only 9 out of 20 dioceses decided in favour of the amendment and the Synod recorded that the amendment was null and void. However, the Synod decided to ask the dioceses to continue to study the question of ordination to women.

Two other decisions taken by the 1976 Synod definitely point to some progress in the place of women. A general policy was adopted that, wherever possible, in all committees, commission and councils of the C.S.I. dioceses and the Synod not less than 25% membership shall be women and not less than 1/3 membership shall be youth between the ages of 20 and 35 years. Further the dioceses were asked to encourage women to take a more active part in the preaching ministry.

According to the action taken by the 1968 session of the Synod the functions of the Theological Commission are three-fold, namely :

(i) to be an advisory body of the Church on Faith and Order questions coming up for consideration from time to time ;

(ii) to draw the attention of the Synod to theological issues of importance for the life of the Church as a whole and

(iii) to promote theological thinking in the Church.

Bearing these functions in mind the theological commission at its meeting in September 1977 has drawn the attention of the Synod to the importance of a *theological focus* for the Church. The occasion for making this statement was the growing tendency of the people in the Church, both clergy and laity, to be swayed by 'every wind of doctrine' coming from different sources, mostly from outside, making the Church's life and witness rather weak and dissipated. The Theological Commission has said :

'The Church is called to grow in maturity and in understanding of faith. Constant watchfulness and critical evaluation are necessary about the different movements inside and outside the Church influencing the members. There are influences which distort the mission of the church through activities in different dioceses organised by other agencies, some of which are heavily financed from outside. Careful scrutiny and evaluation of such programmes is necessary before they are sponsored by the Synod or any of the dioceses and also the follow-up programmes. The Church should be aware of the kind of teaching which some groups and organizations spread among its members.

In order to help the members of the Church and to meet their different kinds of spiritual needs we suggest that the theological students should be equipped with methods and materials for proper Bible study in order to give sound teaching to laity.'

Is A Poor Man Really Free?

[One, who is not fastidious about such aesthetical considerations as metrics and other poetic conventions would find here at least a fairly good statement of the predicament of the 'poor' in India—*Editor*]

In 1947 India became independent
Independent of colonial power?

Yes.....

Thanks to our great men
Gandhi, Patel, Bose and Nehru—the lot

But then—

Political independence?....no
Ponappan, Nagappa, Naseeruddin,
Amalendu, Jasbir Singh—all from the villages
They do not participate at all.

Social independence?....No

Harijans raped
Harijans murdered
Harijans burnt alive
in Belchi, Killavenmani, Bajitpur
everywhere
people without temples
people without schools
people without water
people without souls

Economic independence?....never

a few men enjoy all the land
and capital and national income
'They earned it all with the
sweat of our labour' say the landless poor

Millions unemployed.....

'Since you always see us sitting
around you, say we Indians are lazy.'
Work for only 6 months in a year
'Have a long vacation brothers,' say
the men who own the land

.....Children go without school
.....children drop out of school
'May be it's the garbage cans and
street corners for me'

Millions live in huts without
light, water or sewerage
'Identify with the oppressed, learn
from them, encourage folk arts,'
So the 'socially conscious' intellectual says.

'We feel terribly sorry for you
folks, but we can't do much about
it, we have more important things to do
please just go home and starve,'
the government regrets.

The poor.....

They can go without food
We just don't produce adequate cloth
They can go without education
Medical aid we can't give for all
They can go without a home
And entertainment—that they can surely do

without

The poor man cannot stand this for long
So he protests
Expresses anger through wall posters
Burns buses, derails trains
He demands justice—just a little food....
The rich are perturbed
'What kind of government this
allowing vandalism of this kind
Let a dictator come to control
this destructive mob.'

The government knows no way
to appease the anger of the people
The government only knows force
The police use lathis and bullets, they round up,
torture and sometimes kill. imprison,

....

Where can the poor Indian go
where is justice to be found.....?
Yes, 32 years ago we became
Independent
Is a poor Indian really free?

And yet....

India is struggling..moving..
and growing
Against almost impossible odds
people may be crushed, their bodies mutilated
their hearts without love—
But the spirit—the human spirit
Can never be suppressed.

ARUNA GNANADASON
Bangalore

Rural Development

BEGINS WITH US

Rural Development is given a prominent place in the mission of the Church in India today. A number of rural development projects are being planned in various places. Training at different levels is also organized for Managers, Animators as well as for local leaders. There is generally a great enthusiasm to involve oneself in the development field.

Frequently, one understands development as uplift of the poor in social and economic spheres. As a result, we initiate programmes of conscientisation, people's action, agricultural and small scale industrial activities etc. We speak of changing political structures from the village level onwards. We also organize people into strong associations or groups to fight for their rights.

But does this all satisfy us that we are achieving something, or does it still leave a great something not done, not attempted and not brought to light? 'Son, remember that thou in thy life-time receivedst thy good things and Lazarus in like manner evil things; but now' (St. Luke 16:25). 'For neither there among them any that lacked, for as many as were possessors of lands or houses, sold them and brought the prices of the things that were sold and laid them at the Apostles' feet and distribution was made unto each according, as anyone had need' (Acts 4:34, 35).

The early church, which was closest to the teachings of Jesus and his disciples showed the way, the way to avoid poverty, wide disparities in possession of properties and the attitude of absolute ownership for the enjoyment of one's own self and family. Exploitation is only a secondary measure of the already rich to grow richer at other's cost. The young church in each place was a commune, living for the good of all.

What is our own attitude to development? While promoting development projects, do we continue to nurture the feeling of necessity to raise the walls around ourselves, in order to avoid any possible trespass on own wealth? Does our faith help us to think of the possibility of building up the poor by at least partial dispossession of our own goods and status? Is it ever possible to bring about true development with a section of the society strongly holding on to their entire possessions? How are we growing in development with regard to our social relationships? Is there ever a comprehension of social equality beginning right from our own home in relation to our domestic servants, farm labour and the menial in our neighbourhood? If the holy communion takes us to a common table to share the very blood and body of Christ, is there still something in us which hinders sharing of our bread and butter on a common table with our immediate neighbours, namely those working for us in our home, farm, factory and those who often help us mend our shoes, carry our vegetables or carry us in a rickshaw?

It therefore appears that our development project for the poor and socially downtrodden are only one-half of our endeavour. The other half lies within us, our spirit, our attitude and our commitment, 'If therefore the light that is in thee be darkness, how great is the darkness' (St. Matt. 6:23).

If the 'Kingdom' is the final answer to development, 'seek ye first His Kingdom and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you.' (St. Matt. 6:33).

D. NARSIAH EBENEZER

How Church Can Side with Poor

Geneva (EPS)—In the future, the Commission on the Churches' Participation in Development (CCPD) will work more closely with groups in the field involved in comprehensive development programmes, particularly oriented towards the needs and participation of the poorest section of the population. This was one of the main decisions reached by this Commission of the World Council of Churches (WCC) at its meeting of 17-22 June 1979 in Yaounde, Cameroun. Since its creation in 1971, this was the first time CCPD has met in a third world country.

CCPD was set up as a working instrument to serve WCC member churches in development issues, and has acquired a wide range of experience. Outgoing director Mr. C. I. Itty reflected on this experience in his final report. CCPD, he said, has learned that, no matter how sophisticated or expensive development programmes or projects may be, without the people's participation they are not very successful.

The churches must realize that the only viable choice is to support a development policy aimed at the poorest sector in the particular society and which promotes economic growth, self-reliance and greater social justice.

The Commission made its decisions after having the results of a survey, begun in 1977, of CCPD's work and experience. In the 1980's, emphasis will be on increased co-operation with some 200 groups all over the world involved in development education, studies on development issues, policies of transnational corporations and the macro-economic problems they engender, technical services and appropriate technology, documentation and, most of all, people's participation. A closer work relationship will be promoted with groups involved in comprehensive development programmes.

Next spring, at a CCPD consultation, some 80 representatives of these groups will begin discussions on the Commission's structures and the means at its disposal after the WCC's next General Assembly in 1983.

The conclusion of the study on the churches' relations with and responsibilities towards the poor was approved in Yaounde. The final document, 'Towards a Church in Solidarity with the Poor', will be submitted for approval to the WCC's Central Committee next summer. The study aims at encouraging the churches to 'make the right choice' by deliberately taking the side of the poor and the weak, and to make every effort to see that they are represented on the decision-making bodies of their respective countries. On the other hand, this kind of solidarity with the poor will raise theological questions, challenge present ecclesiastical structures which have little relevance to the poor, and require a redefinition of the churches' tasks and missionary methods, and serious reflection on present life-styles.

During their stay in Cameroun, commission members had the opportunity of visiting local development programmes set up by the churches. They were received by the Rev. Jean Kotto, President of the Federation of Churches and Evangelical Missions of Cameroun (FCEMC) which is a CCPD partner.

Courtesy : *Ecumenical Press Service.*

US Evangelicals Commitment to Simpler Lifestyle, Poor and Justice

Ventnor, N.J., (EPS)—More than 100 evangelical Christians met here for four days recently to explore their mutual commitment to simpler lifestyles for the sake of evangelism and justice.

The gathering—the US Consultation on Simple Lifestyle—drew Christians from the United States and several Third World countries. It was held here, in co-operation with the Overseas Ministries Study Centre.

The consultation was held in preparation for the International Consultation on Simple Lifestyles, to be held in London in March, 1980. The London meeting will be sponsored by the Theology and Education Group of the Lausanne Committee for World Evangelization and the World Evangelical Fellowship.

'The Ventnor consultation has confirmed for me a powerful movement of the Holy Spirit within the church,' said Dr. Ronald A. Sider, Philadelphia, one of the two co-ordinators (along with Horace Fenton, Bethlehem, Pa., formerly with the Latin America Mission) of the gathering.

'We have seen an exciting affirmation by evangelicals that biblical evangelism is inseparable from a commitment to the poor and to justice,' he said.

Dr. Frank Gaebelein, Arlington, Va., former co-editor of *Christianity Today*, told the consultation that even though he had been attending evangelical conferences since the 1920's, he 'had never yet heard a major presentation of Amos' or of other Old Testament prophets that focus on justice and the poor.

Suggestions for simplifying lifestyles and understanding present inequities between the rich and the poor included opportunities for exposure to the contexts of poverty and oppression both here and abroad, study of neglected passages of Scripture, reordering of seminary education to include exposure to poverty and local study and support groups for Christians who are in transition to simpler lifestyles.

'Simplification of our lives must always flow out of unconditional commitment to the Risen Jesus as Lord and Saviour,' said Dr. Sider. 'When God came to share his plan of salvation, he took on the flesh of a poor oppressed Jew. Effective biblical evangelism in a hungry world necessarily shares in that kind of costly vulnerability.'

Courtesy : *Ecumenical Press Service.*

Letter to the Editor

Notices

CLUSTERS OF MISSIONARY CONGREGATIONS —MADURAI STYLE

Sir,

In his article published in the May issue, Mr. Samuel Amirtham had called for comments on the architectural details relating to the proposed building for a Cathedral complex in Madurai. I write to suggest certain points in case they have not already been provided for, such as inclusion of the following units in the Assembly Hall or elsewhere:—

- (a) Small class-rooms for the conduct of separate Sunday School classes for the Beginner, Primary, Junior, Intermediate and Senior Groups of children, and Adult Bible Study classes, complete with wall-blackboards.
- (b) Halls for Women's Fellowship Meetings. Committee Meetings, Diocesan Councils, Conferences, Retreats, Wedding Receptions, Farewell Functions, and the like, complete with Kitchens for preparing light refreshments and Toilet Rooms.
- (c) A Crèche for little children accompanying their parents to Church Services.
- (d) Recreation Rooms for young men and women.
- (e) Music Rooms where training in Church Music (say, for Sunday Schools)—vocal and instrumental—could be imparted, and Choir Practices held.
- (f) A Chapel for weekday Services, when the attendance could be thin: and for Baptisms which are not part of the main Services, complete with Font.
- (g) Separate Vestries for the Clergy and the Choir at the North Western end.
- (h) A small room or hall echeloned into the western side of the Alter for wedding couples to sign the Marriage Register.
- (i) A Verandh all round the Cathedral for Processions on Festival Days, such as Christmas, Palm Sunday, Easter, and so on.

As for the fish-design of the Cathedral, I wonder if it would be noticeable to the untrained eye or it would only be identifiable on a blue-print. If the latter is the case, the infructuous expenditure which would be involved in giving circular and oval shapes to the walls could be avoided.

It will be worthwhile considering if the Choir and the Organ could be positioned on a raised Gallery (say, on a half-Flat) in the Chancel. The floor space thus saved could be utilized for reserved pews for the parents and close-relatives of children being Baptized or Confirmed and couples getting married; and also for guest-choirs putting up Sacred Cantatas, and the like.

Lt. Col. J. R. DANIEL (*Retd*)
WELLINGTON (*Nilgiris*)

WANTED

PUBLIC RELATIONS OFFICER FOR UNITED THEOLOGICAL COLLEGE, BANGALORE

Those with experience in public relations; fund raising and administration will be considered. Salary scale Rs. 500-25-750+25% of basic salary as D.A. and free housing. Applications with details of qualifications and experience should be sent to the Principal, United Theological College, 17 Miller's Road, Bangalore-560 046.

WANTED

'Applications invited from Trained Postgraduate, communicant members of the CNI or CSI, for the Post of LADY PRINCIPAL at Pratt Memorial Girls' School (residential), Calcutta. To join early, not later than 1st January 1980. Minimum 10 years experience in English Medium Schools essential. Grade: Rs. 1,400-80-2,200-100-3,200, with Medical allowance Rs. 50 and High Cost of Living allowance Rs. 40, benefit of Provident Fund, Gratuity, partly furnished Quarters and use of School Car.

Apply by 20th August, 1979 to:
Chairman, Board of Governors,
Pratt Memorial School,
Bishop's House, 51, Chowringhee Road,
Calcutta-700 071'.

BISHOP'S COLLEGE (Affiliated to Serampore College) 224, Acharya Jagadish Chandra Bose Road, Calcutta-700 017.

Applications are invited from church-sponsored candidates for admission to the following Courses:

1. 3½-year B.D. Degree Course commencing from January 5, 1980. Minimum qualification required for admission: B.A., B.Sc., B.Com. or its equivalent.
2. 4-year B.Th. Degree Course (Bengali-medium) commencing from June 21, 1980. Minimum qualification required for admission: High School Certificate or its equivalent.
3. 4-year College Diploma Course of training for the ordained ministry through the medium of English. Minimum qualification required for admission: 10 + 2 level. Commencing from June 21, 1980.

Selection for admission will be through an Entrance Examination (in English language, Bible Knowledge, and General Knowledge) in the first half of October 1979.

Applications should reach the Principal by August 28, 1979, the latest. For enquiries write to the Principal.

P. B. SANTRAM,
Principal.

[AUGUST 1979]

News from the Dioceses

COIMBATORE DIOCESE

St. John's Church, C.S.I.
Mount Road, Coonoor,
Nilgiris 643 102

Dated 4-7-79

To congratulate Miss Isabel Ruth Neill, sister of Bishop Stephen Neill, on having been awarded the title of M.B.E. by the Queen of England, a meeting of representative character was held at All Saints' Parish Hall, Coonoor, Nilgiris on 30th June, 79. There was a large gathering. Speeches on behalf of many Christian organizations and Churches, including Roman Catholic Church were made. Dr. Samuel (Youth for Christ), Mr. F. Stephen (Ambassadors of Christ), Mr. Howksi (C.M.S.), Rev. Fr. Fernandes (Ecumenical Council), Miss Gwen Cushing, Rev. John White, Dr. (Miss) Bell-hart and others spoke enumerating the valuable services rendered by Miss Neill among the poor and needy people. She knows Urdu well; and this has helped her to work among the Muslim women. Her first Muslim convert—Mrs. Pyari Jun—also spoke. The function came to a close with prayer by Mr. Bissil.

—REV. J. M. D. BARNABAS.

KARNATAKA CENTRAL DIOCESE

There was a week of Standing Committees. Unfortunately the Boarding Homes Committee and the Nurture and Witness Committee could not meet for want of quorum. This has been a continuing problem and a constitutional amendment is being brought before the Diocesan Council to seek to remedy this. The present rules require that one-third of the elected members be present. In most of the Committees there are four such members and so two of these are required for a quorum. No account is taken of ex-officio members. This leads to a rather odd situation. At the Boarding Homes Committee there were 20 members present, but no quorum. The Committee could constitutionally meet with only 2 members!

Ministerial Committee. It was reported that 24 pastorates have not submitted their audited accounts for 1977/78. The accounts for 1978/79 are also now due. It appears that most of them are in fact ready and I again remind them to send them to the Treasurer. The accounts department have been able to get assessments paid fairly well up to date and are to be congratulated for a much improved situation. All money remitted by way of assessment goes to the direct support of the ministry. Upkeep and rent of parsonages is met from the Diocesan Fund. It was therefore felt that 'assessment' is not a good term—it sounds too much like a tax. It will hereafter be known as 'support for the ministry'. The budget for this year was rather depressing. Even after maximum pruning it still shows a large deficit. This is due to increased costs. There will be a meeting of all Presbyters and Pastorate Committee Officers on 18th August to review the situation. It

was decided that the Diocese would become a member of the United Theological College governing Council.

Education Committee. Ten centres have been selected for conducting Adult Education programme.

Property Committee. All properties are generally being maintained in a good state of repair. Some new constructions are held up for want of finance. Maintaining Church buildings is the responsibility of the Pastorate concerned. They are requested to budget for this each year.

Social & Economic Concerns Committee. Plans are now well on hand for starting an institution for mentally handicapped children. This will be on the All Saints' Church Compound and closely associated with Cathedral School. The centre for small scale entrepreneurs is also taking a final shape. The question of Diocesan workers standing for civic elections is under consideration.

Medical Committee. A large expansion of medical work in Channapatna is under consideration. A policy for medical work is still being worked out. The general trend is away from institutions towards community health.

Mr. and Mrs. C. G. Gokavi celebrated their Golden Wedding Anniversary at a large function got up by their children. Mr. Gokavi retired from the post of Executive Trustee of the A. F. & P. Board at the end of June. His contribution to the former Diocese and the A. F. & P. Board is beyond measure. He has a capacity for work which few can equal at his age. He brought to the Church a life-time of experience in business. We are most grateful for this. I doubt whether even now he will take a well earned rest.

The clergy retreat was held in Tumkur and two profitable days were held under the leadership of Rev. Dr. Eric Lott on the subject of 'Worship, Prayer and Preaching'. As much as the official sessions there is the value of building up fellowship among the clergy. This Diocese can be thankful for the good fellowship among the clergy.

Excellent results were announced at Bishop Cotton Boys School Prize Day. Over the last few years there has been much discussion about the relationship of Bishop Schools with the Diocese. This had been a matter of tension and the new Constitution approved by the Diocese has created a much better understanding to the benefit of all.

A seminar on management was held for those in positions of leadership in the Church and Institutions. About 20 people attended this two-day seminar led by Mr. Kunders, Administrator of St. Martha's Hospital and a member of St. Mark's Cathedral.

At the A. F. & P. Board, Mr. T. C. Wellmore was welcomed as the new Executive Trustee. He takes charge on 1st July.

St. Peter's tide saw several functions at the Bishop Cotton Schools. In addition to the usual services there was the dedication of the new auditorium at the Girls School and Hostel Block of the Boys School.

St. John's through their EFICOR Educational and Training Unit organised a series of 8 lectures on Economics and Development by Dr. Norman Ewert of USA. St. John's is building up a great variety of programmes on several fronts.

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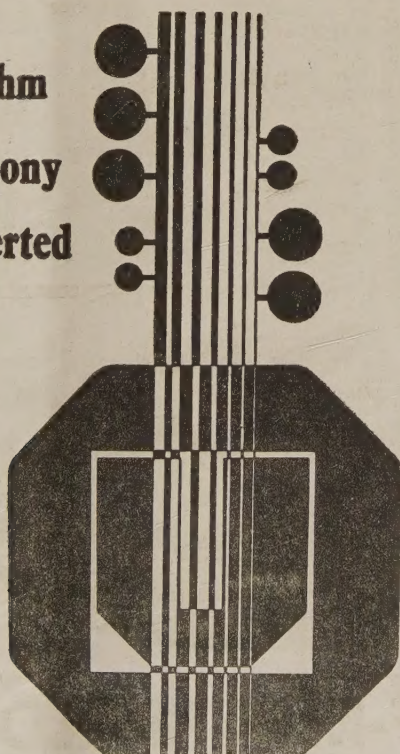
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